

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 NIC-01

COME-00 EB-11 LAB-06 SIL-01 RSR-01 EUR-25 OMB-01

AID-20 CU-04 FRB-02 TRSE-00 OPR-02 AGR-20 /179 W

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R 092108Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4834

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

CINCSO

DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 2101

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, UY

SUBJ: DECISIVE WEEK FOR THE LABOR PROBLEM

CINCSO FOR POLAD

REF: MVD-2069

1. SUMMARY: THE OUTLAWED CNT LABOR CONFEDERATION IS SEEKING TO INFUSE NEW ENTHUSIASM INTO THE FLAGGING STRIKE MOVEMENT. GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, HAS STEPPED UP ITS OWN CAMPAIGN TO END REMAINING HOLDOUTS TO ITS BACK-TO-WORK ORDER, AND STRIKE SUPPORT APPEARS TO BE WANING. END SUMMARY.

2. ANTI-ADMINISTRATION GROUPS DISTRIBUTED NUMEROUS LEAFLETS AND FLY SHEETS OVER THE WEEKEND CALLING ON WORKERS TO ADHERE TO A TOTAL STRIKE TODAY (JULY 9). AT SIZEABLE FUNERAL PROCESSION FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENT AND COMMUNIST YOUTH MOVEMENT MEMBER, RAMON PERE (WHO ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE, WAS SHOT BY MILITARY

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PATROL EVENING OF JULY 6, WHILE ATTACKING A BUS AND USING

REVOLVER TO RESIST ARREST), LEAFLETS WERE ALSO PASSED OUT CALLING FOR A MASS DEMONSTRATION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT AT 5:00 P.M. THIS EVENING IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA OF MONTEVIDEO.

3. GOU ISSUED COMMUNIQUE EVENING JULY 8 CALLING UPON THOSE WHO ABSENTED THEMSELVES FROM THEIR JOBS LAST WEEK TO "CHANGE THEIR WAYS AND TO ACT WITH PRUDENCE." COMMUNIQUE, AS WELL AS OTHER OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS, SINGLES OUT BANK WORKERS WHO HAVE REMAINED ON STRIKE. SEPARATE DECLARATIONS BY STATE BANKING INSTITUTIONS WARNED WORKERS THAT THEY HAVE ONE FINAL CHANCE TO REPORT TO WORK TODAY OR FACE DISMISSAL.

4. WAR OF WORDS BETWEEN ADMINISTRATION AND ITS OPPOSITION CONTINUED OVER WEEKEND. DECLARATION ISSUED BY MONTEVIDEO CATHOLIC BISHOP PARTELLI AND THE CHURCH'S PRESBYTERIAL COUNCIL GINGERLY CRITICIZED THE EXECUTIVE FOR CLOSING CONGRESS AND OUTLAWING CNT. PRESIDENT BORDABERRY, IN LONG INTERVIEW WITH ARGENTINE WEEKLY "GENTE," DEFENDED HIS ACTIONS. AS HE HAD IN HIS SPEECH OF JUNE 27, BORDABERRY STATED THAT THE "SUBSTANCE" OF DEMOCRACY, INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS, AND NATIONAL WELL-BEING HAD BEEN PRESERVED AT THE COST OF ONLY A TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF INSTITUTIONAL "FORMS." BORDABERRY AFFIRMED THAT "TRADITIONAL POLITICAL PARTIES OF ALL IDEOLOGICAL TENDENCIES WILL BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE TO OPERATE IN THE COUNTRY AS LONG AS THEY DO NOT RESORT TO ILLEGAL METHODS." HE RESTATED HIS PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO FREE ELECTIONS IN 1976.

5. REPRESENTATIVES OF "POR LA PATRIA" AND "ROCHA" MOVEMENT POLITICAL FACTIONS OF THE BLANCO PARTY JOINED LEFTIST "FRENTE AMPLIO" REPRESENTATIVES IN SUBMITTING REQUEST JULY 7 TO THE SUPREME COURT TO DECLARE BORDABERRY'S ACT CLOSING THE CONGRESS UNCONSTITUTIONAL. LATEST ACTION IS ADDITIONAL INDICATION OF COOPERATION BETWEEN LEADERSHIP ELEMENTS OF THESE GROUPS (SEE MVD-2077). HOWEVER, JORGE BATTLE'S COLORADO PARTY LIST 15 FACTION, SENATOR WASHINGTON BELTRAN'S BLANCO LIST 400, AND SMALL RADICAL CHRISTIAN UNION PARTY, ALL ISSUED STATEMENTS OVER THE WEEKEND THAT THEY WOULD HAVE NO PART IN ANY COMMON ALLIANCE WITH THE MARXIST "FRENTE AMPLIO."

6. COMMENT: AS OF TODAY, JULY 9, OPPOSITION EFFORT TO RENEW  
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FLAGGING GENERAL STRIKE APPEAR TO HAVE FAILED. WHILE SOME FACTORIES CONTINUE TO HAVE MARKED ABSENTEEISM, BUS SERVICE AND DOWNTOWN COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS LARGELY OPERATING NORMALLY. INFORMATION FROM BANKING SECTOR IS THAT SOME WORKERS ABSENT LAST WEEK HAVE RETURNED TO THEIR JOBS, ALTHOUGH MANY PRIVATE BANKS STILL WORKING WITH MINIMUM STAFFS. ABSENTEEISM AT HBOOMC BANKS REPORTEDLY GREATLY REDUCED TODAY. FROM POINT OF VIEW OF SPORTS-MAD URUGUAYANS, PERHAPS BEST

THING THAT HAS HAPPENED RECENTLY WAS SMASHING VICTORY  
YESTERDAY OF URUGUAYAN NATIONAL SOCCER TEAM IN WORLD CUP PLAY-  
OFFS. SOCCER PLAYERS ARE AFFILIATED WITH OUSTED CNT, BUT  
DESPITE GENERAL STRIKE THEY DECISIVELY BEAT EQUADOR'S  
SELECTION.

7. STRIKES GRADUAL LOSS OF MOMENTUM IS NOT HOWEVER LIKELY TO BE  
THE END OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S LABOR PROBLEMS. NEXT THREE  
MONTHS, TRADITIONALLY THE HARDEST WINTER PERIOD, MAY WELL BE  
MARKED BY CONTINUATION OF STRIKES IN SOME INDUSTRIAL SECTIONS  
AS WELL AS CUSTOMARY SHORTAGES OF CERTAIN FOOD ITEMS (BUTTER,  
MEAT AND POSSIBLY REDUCED WHEAT SUPPLIES) WHICH MIGHT GIVE  
RISE TO NEW LABOR DISCORD. ADMINISTRATION WILL ALSO HAVE TO  
CONTENTEND WITH UNITY MOVES OF OPPOSITION POLITICAL FACTIONS  
IN ITS EFFORT TO PROVE TO "FRENTE AMPLIO" AND BLANCO PARTY RANK  
AND FILE SUPPORTERS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION CAN DELIVER ON ITS  
PROMISES BETTER THAN THE POLITICIANS.  
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